

## Public Outreach and Education



Lawana Collier (PPC) talks to Waianae students about potential sources of polluted runoff in their watershed at the Waianae Keiki Water Festival 2002.

Many children are attracted to, or at the very least, interested in our presentation, booth or station because of Apoha the O'opu. This full body costume is in the image of a native Hawaiian fish and has been the program mascot for several years. There is such a high demand to use the costume for outreach events that two new costumes will be constructed next year. A child's excitement over their photo with Apoha is the catalyst to entice their parents or other adults to read the accompanying nonpoint source informational materials. This year the photo frame was updated and includes a simple description of nonpoint source pollution and ways people can help control it. Other attempts to increase the general public's awareness of polluted runoff issues are through public service announcements, the Program's display board posted at conferences, and the distribution of our brochure.



Apoha poses at the Molokai Keiki Water Festival with Ruby Raindrop and Sammy Soil of the Natural Resources Conservation Service.



Outreach materials provided at scheduled events and upon request.

The Program continues its education and outreach efforts throughout the State. Information on nonpoint source pollution is distributed through various media, including coloring books, pencils, window clings, t-shirts, brochures, and posters. At large outreach events like the State Farm Fair or the Keiki Water Festivals, the Program focus their effort on the youth. Just in the month of September over 2,000 students, teachers and community members participated in our educational events, not including many other education efforts conducted through 319 funded projects.

The vast majority of the state still remains unaware of polluted runoff, how individuals contribute to it and how they can prevent or control it. In some cases lack of information is not the problem, but it is the lack of a convenient, affordable or practical alternative that hinders individuals from changing the way they do business. The success of our outreach and education is in the changes in behavior we initiate. The program will be looking for new ways to inform and affect change in Hawaii's residents, as we all address nonpoint source pollution in the future.